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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-10

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 PM-03 L-02 PRS-01

CIAE-00 INR-09 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SAJ-01 MBFR-02 ACDA-10

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
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USMISSION NATO
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C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 6434

LIMDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, NATO, FR
SUBJECT: FRENCH INTEREST IN WEU' S STANDING COMMITTEE ON ARMAMENTS

REF: A) PARIS 1063 1
B) PARIS 9425
C) PARIS 23609
D) ROME 1969

1. INFORMATION RE ITALIAN INTERPRETATION OF RENEWED FRENCH INTEREST IN WEU' S STANDING COMMITTEE ON ARMAMENTS (REFTEL D) FITS CLOSELY WITH OUR OWN REPORTING ON SUBJECT (SEE PARTICULARLY REFTEL A).

2. DEFENSE MINISTER DEBRE' S DIPLOMATIC ADVISOR TOLD EMBOFF ON MARCH 14 GOF IS ANXIOUS AVOID HAVING WEU BECOME MORIBUND GIVE ORGANIZATION' S ROLE IN EUROPEAN ARMS CONTROL AREA, INCLUDING SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS COVERING GERMANY. FRENCH ARE CONCERNED THAT FUTURE OF WEU COULD BE COMPROMISED SHOULD ANY OF ITS MORE IMPORTANT COMMITTEES SUCH AS THE STANDING COMMITTE ON
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ARMAMENTS BE ALLOWED TO DIE. ACCORDINGLY, FRENCH, WHILE NOT SEEKING TO " REJEUVENATE" THIS COMMITTEE, WISH TO SEE IT PLAY SOME ROLE IN HELPING COORDINATE EUROPEAN ARMAS PRODUCTION ARRANGEMENTS.

3. DEF MIN OFFICIAL REPEATED FRENCH OBJECTIONS TO EUROGROUP ARRANGEMENTS IN ALMOST IDNETICAL LANGUAGE TO THAT REPORTED REFTEL B. HE ADDED, HOWEVER, FRENCH HAD NO DESIRE SEE EURO-GROUP SUPPLEMENTED BY SOME OTHER EUROPEAN ORGANIZATION, AND IN ANY EVENT DID NOT BELIEVE THEY COULD DISSUADE GERMANS AND BRITS FROM THE STRONG SUPPORT FOR EUROGROUP.

4. COMMENT: DESPITE FRENCH DISCLAIMERS, WE CONTINUE BELIEVE GOF WOULD WELCOME, IF NOT ACTIVELY PROMOTE, INITATIVES SUCH AS REPORTED BY EMBASSY ROME WHICH WOULD LESSEN EUROPEAN INTEREST IN NATO- ORIENTED EUROGROUP WHILE INCREASING POTENTIAL FOR FRANCE TO SEE ITS ARMS IN EUROPE. WE SEE INCREASED ARMS SALES RATHER THAN EFFORT TO DEVELOP EMBRYO EUROPEAN DEFENSE ORGANIZATION AS
PRIME FRENCH INTEREST IN ANY SUCH ARRANGEMENTS. INDEED, DEF MIN OFFICIAL REITERATED WELL- KNOWN FRENCH VIEW THAT EFFORTS CREATE EUROPEAN DEFENSE ORGANIZATION WOULD BE HARMFUL TO PRESENT EUROPEAN STABILITY AND THAT FRENCH CONTINUE PREFER STATUS QUO, I. E., INTEGRATED NATO FOR ALL ALLIANCE COUNTRIES, EXCEPT FRANCE, SIGNIFICANT US FORCES IN EUROPE, AND FRANCE COOPERATING WITH THE ALLIANCE SHORT OF RE-INTEGRATION.
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